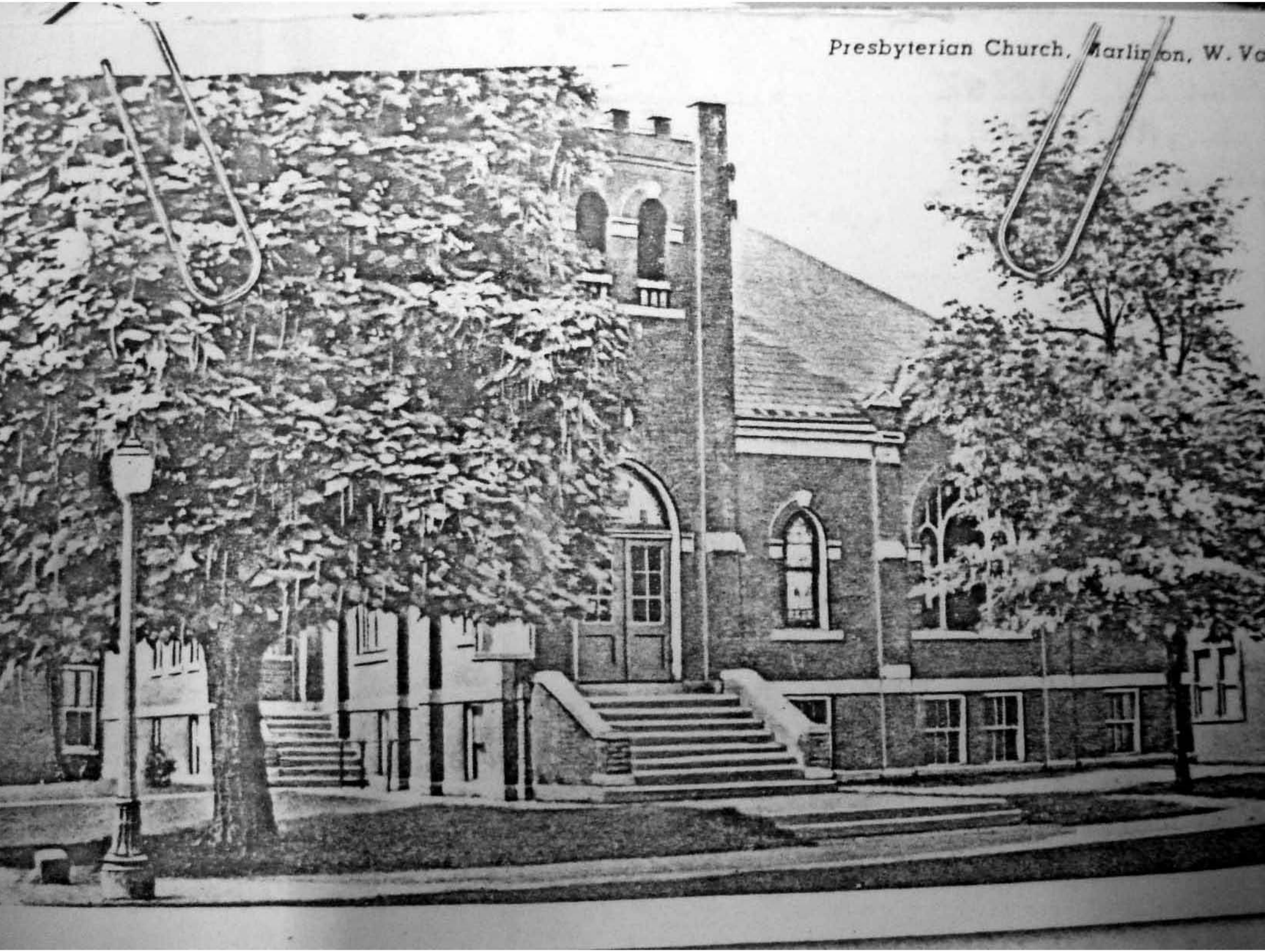
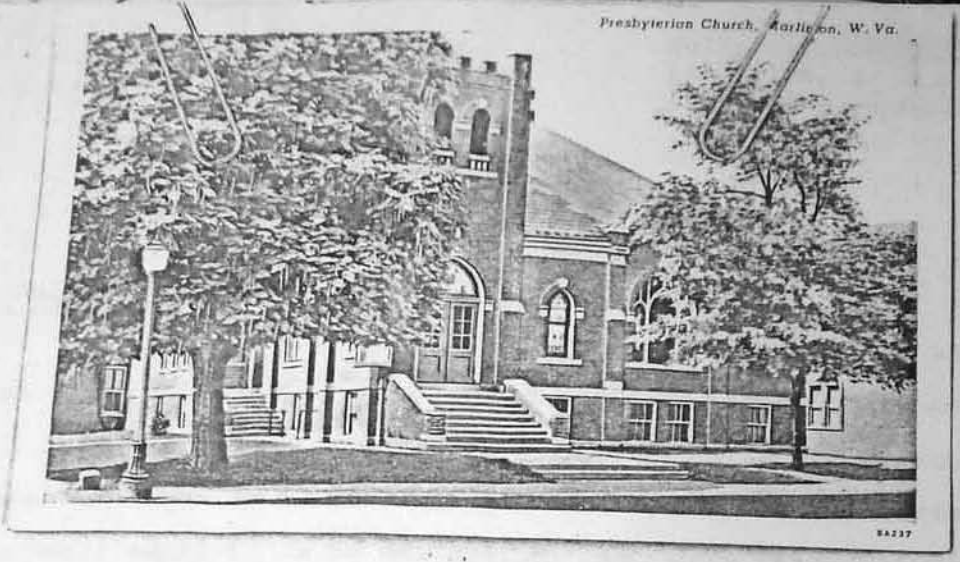

Presbyterian Church, Marlinton, W. Va



MARLINTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - Marlinton, W. Va.

Organized 1881 - This church which took the place of the first frame building built in 1882, was built in 1915.

Sept. 18, 1940

Marlinton, W. Va.
Pocahontas County

Marlinton Presbyterian Church.

Chapter 6 - Section 1 & 2

The Presbyterian Church at Marlinton, originally known as "Marlin Bottom", was organized April 23, 1881. Dr. David S. Sydenstricker is credited with leadership in the organization of the church, which was organized with twelve charter members, namely: A. M. McLaughlin, Mrs. Mary Price McLaughlin, Mrs. Elizabeth McLaughlin, Harper McLaughlin, Mrs. Lucy Gay, Miss Nancy G. Price, Mrs. Caroline Warwick, Mrs. S. M. Apperson, Miss Emma Warwick, James Cleek, Mrs. A. Cleek, and Geo. M. Kee

A. M. McLaughlin and Geo. M. Kee were elected and ordained ruling elders. Of the twelve charter members but one remains, Miss Emma Warwick.

Dr. Sydenstricker supplied the Church until 1884, when Dr. William T. Price was called as pastor and he served until 1898.

G. W. Nickell --------- 1900 - 1908

A. S. Rachal -- ------- 1909 - 1913

J. M. Walker ---------- 1914 - 1920

H. H. Orr ------------ 1921 - 1926

K. V. Bowen ---------- 1927 - 1932

Samuel B. Lapsley ----- 1933 - 1938

James C. Wool --------- 1938 - present

All of the pastors of this church have been strong pastors and consecrated men. They have all come up to the requirements of a Presbyterian minister as laid down by that father in Israel, the late Dr. Samuel Davies of Virginia, who trained the youth Patrick Henry. He said only three things

[illegible] respect [illegible]

were required of a Presbyterian minister - to out work, out preach, and out pray the ministers of any other denomination.

Among the ministers who supplied the pulpit during the interims when the church was without a pastor, were Dr. Sydenstricker, Dr. John I. Armstrong, Dr. Reed Lacy and Rev. C. W. Peyton.

In 1882 the erection of the first church building, which was frame , was begun. It is located at the corner of Second Avenue and Main Street.

In an old copy of the Pocahontas Times, I came across the following letter concerning the lumber used in the first church:

Hinton, W. Va.

Dear Friend Calvin:

I am sending you a few lines in regard to the fiftieth year of the church at Marlinton. I came to Marlinton the year it was organized. The lumber was sawed at the mouth of Clover Creek. The mill was the second steam saw mill in the county. I was the engineer. John Peters and Capt. J. C. Lakin of New York State were running the mill. We rafted the lumber from Clover Lick to Marlinton on the fifth day of July, 1882. The lumber was landed on the bank at the foot of the abutment on the east side of the river. On the previous evening, Rev. Robert Curry was drowned in Leather Bark Creek, where Cass

now stands.

Calvin, in the lists you published were the names of men and women who were friends of my young manhoood. Nearly all have gone to a land from whence no traveler returns. I could give you quite a few more facts if I were with you. I am a poor writer for the task.

From your friend who is not as young as he once was.

C. R. Eubank

While they were working on this church, Noah Hoover, a carpenter, lost his hammer. When the church was torn down, the hammer was found in the boxing.

This church building served until 1915 when the present fine brick edifice was built under the leadership of Rev. J. M. Walker.

This church has welcomed the use of its building to many other congregations of different denominations. The M. E. and Southern Methodists used it until they could build churches of their own. For years the Episcopaliens held services here until they, too, could build a church. At one time the Baptists worshipped here regularly and also did the Methodist Protestants.

Sons of the Church: Rev. Henry W. McLaughlin, Director of the Country Church Department of the Southern Presbyterian Church andRev. Ewell Wiley, pastor of the Weatherford Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma.

Those who have served as Elders in this church from

its beginning to the present time are: A. M. McLaughlin, George M. Kee, John W. Warwick, George Baxter, S. W. Holt, Allen S. Livesay, R. B. Slaven, E. D. King, N. R. Price, Z. S. Smith, Sr., J. A. Sydenstricker, S. N. Hench, J. W. Baxter, L. M. McClintic, Calvin W. Price, A. P. Edgar, Zane Moore, T. S. McNeel, S. L. Brown, James M. Bear, E. C. Smith, E. H. Wade, J. A. McLaughlin and W. L. Davis.

Those who have served as deacons: Walter Mann, Andrew Price, E. F. McLaughlin, S. L. Brown, F. R. Hunter, B. F. Hamilton, J. A. Hoover, T. S. Patterson, Calvin W. Price, E. H. Wade, J. W. Baxter, A. B. McCreary, A. P. Edgar, J. A. McLaughlin, H. L. Byers, N. J. Candler, C. E. Denison, W. L. Davis, Wise Herold, J. M. Bear, Z. S. Smith, Jr., Dr. E. G. Herold, Charles A. Sharp, June H. McElwee, C. P. Dorsey, Clark Young, Dewey Stemple, and F. P. McLaughlin.

DEVELOPMENT: Through many dangers, toils and snares we have already come. It seems that our church is always facing crises and things that promise to put us back, but out of them all we seem to go forward. For instance, about the time we get a pastor cut down to our pattern, a stronger congregation looks upon him and takes him away from us. We realize that we are ruined, but in due time the Great Shepherd sends us another pastor and His work goes on. Mr. Calvin Price says, "I remember years ago the first congregational meeting I attended. It was called to dismiss a ruling elder and his family to another church. There was but one elder left, so no session meeting could be held. Fully a fourth of the membership was represented in this family and the main support of the

church. Soon other workers were raised up. God may take away workers but His work goes on".

OUTSTANDING WORK: The outstanding feature of the activities of this church is the work of the women, as now organized in the Auxiliary. (I shall give a history of the Auxiliary later).

There are but a few descendants of the twelve charter members on the roll of the church. Presbyterians from the north, east, south and west have come to us. Christians from the Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Baptist, United Brethern and other denominations have thrown their lot with ours.Freely have we received and freely have we given for we have sent members to the north, east, south and west and to our sister denominations.

GROWTH: There has been a steady consistent growth throughout the years. In the words of Nehemiah, the people were amid the work. All of our pastors have been leaders, too, and consequently this has been a working church. From a dozen charter members at the beginning to over three hundred fifty at the present time.

There remains much to be said. The work of the first pastor who preached from Swago to Durbin would take a chapter in itself. This field is now occupied by four resident ministers. In speaking of the first minister, Rev. David Sydenstricker, it is said that he was one of the most learned men ever in the county. He could speak five different languages. His son, Mr. J. A. Sydenstricker, is an elder in this

CHURCH. Both he and his wife have always taken a very active part in both the church and Sabbath School work.

The promptness with which this church has been able to meet its financial obligations and contributions, ought perhaps to be mentioned. The majority of its members are cheerful, proportional and systematic givers. Even in years of financial stress the budget has been overpaid.

The Marlinton Presbyterian Church has always been a Sunday School church. For sometime there were four mission sunday schools maintained in the congregation, - Elk, Stony Creek, Stilwell and Buckeye. The enrollment in the five schools was over five hundred.

Some forty years ago the question came up about closing the sunday school for the winter. There was a public meeting on the next Sunday when the people of the community gathered to protest again at closing the school. It has gone on since then winter and summer.

At present this Sabbath school has a membership of two hundred. Mr. Calvin W. Price is the Supt. There are five departments with Supts.:

Beginners - Mrs. Dewey Stemple

Primary - Mrs. Alice Jackson

Junior - Mrs. S. N. Hench

Intermediate - Mrs. J. C. Wool

Adult - Under supervision of S. S. Supt.

The Men's Bible Class with Mr. T. S. McNeel as teacher, has about forty members. Each spring the class has its annual sugar stir. There is always a large crowd of members and

respect

visitors. The maple sugar water is stirred until it becomes thick and is eaten hot. This is one of the outstanding social events of the Men's Bible Class.

The Daily Vacation Bible School is held for two weeks each summer and is under the supervision of the regular Sunday School.

At present there are two outpost Sabbath Schools, one on Elk and one at Buckeye. These Sabbath Schools are maintained by the people of the communities in which they meet so the membership is not counted with that of this Sunday School. The plans for next summer are two more outpost Sabbath Schools direct from this church and maintained by this church.

The church also sponsors the Pioneer Camp of Presbytery and the Young Peoples Conference of the Synod.Besides the work mentioned above, there is other definite outpost work done by the church. The church paid a definite part of the salary of Mr. O. N. Miles while he was doing Home Mission work in the confines of this congregation. Before the coming of Mr. Miles, the church employed a student assistant during the summer vacation months. Mr. Wool, the present pastor of this church, does mission work on Elk and at Buckeye. He also holds services upon invitation at the Federal Prison Camp on the Mill Point-Richwood road, as do other ministers from other denominations.

The resident membership of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church is three hundred eighty members. There are three other churches in the town and the population of the town is about sixteen hundred forty.

ANNIVERSARY:

On April 26, 1931, the Marlinton Presbyterian Church, at a morning and evening service, comemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the church. Rev. J. M. Walker, a former pastor, preached at the morning service and Rev. H. H. Orr, of Richwood, also a former pastor, preached at the evening service. Mr. Calvin M. Price read the history of the church. Large congregations attended each service. At the morning service there were present a number who attended the dedication of the first church building in the summer of 1883. Among those were: J. Albert Sharp, Harlow Waugh, J. A. and L. F. McLaughlin, Fred Beard, J. R. Ruckman, Mrs. Lane Moore and Mrs. Augusta Wiley. At the evening service the Methodist congregation joined in and the pastor Rev. J. H. Haley presented a resolution by his official board of congratulations and well wishes. A short historical sketch of the church was also read at the evening service. All in all it was a fitting observation and a memorable event in the life of the church and the community. The presence of two beloved former pastors added great happiness to the occasion. Pastors come and pastors go but each occupies his own peculiar niche in the affections of his congregation and the people in general.

The three pastors, Messrs. Walker, Orr and Bowen, who were in the pulpit on this occasion, served this church over a period of eighteen years in combined pastorates. A leading elder of the church expressed the sentiment that, when he saw the three men, he was reminded that he had been a member of

the committees which recommended their calls, and no mistakes had been made in each case.

The Rev. J. C. Wool, who is occupying the pulpit in the Marlinton Presbyterian Church at the present time was originally from North Carolina. He was graduated from Davidson College in North Carolina and from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Wool came to Marlinton from Uniontown, Alabama where he had been pastor of a church for five years. Mrs. Wool was from Anniston, Alabama. They have two children. Mr. Wool is an excellent preacher and is greatly beloved as a pastor. He has a large following among the young people.

The last revival meeting held at this church was during the latter part of January and the first of February, 1940. The Rev. Wm. E. Hill, Jr., of Hopewell, Virginia conducted the meeting.

Information:

Records of the church.
Copies of Pocahontas Times, 1931
Mr. T. S. McNeel
Rev. O. N. Miles
Rev. J. C. Wool
Mrs. S. N. Hench

October 10, 1940

Nelle Y. McLaughlin
Marlinton, W. Va.
Pocahontas County

-1-

Chapter 6 - Section 2

History of the women's societies of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church.

On the afternoon of November 5, 1902, twelve ladies met at the home of Misses Fannie and Mary McLaughlin and organized the Ladies Aid Society of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church. The pastor, Rev. G. W. Nickell, was present and opened the meeting with prayer, and assisted in the organization. The charter members were: Mrs. T. S. Patterson, Mrs. M. A. McClintic, Mrs. Andrew Price, Mrs. Anna L. Price, Mrs. G. W. Nickell, Mrs. H. S. Rucker, Mrs. S. S. Steele, Mrs. W. A. Bratton, Miss Fannie McLaughlin, Miss Mary E. McNulty, Miss Bertha Boswell, Miss Mary McLaughlin, and Miss Anna V. Price. The first officers were:

President - Mrs. Andrew Price

Vice-President - Mrs. G. W. Nickell

Sec. & Treas. - Miss Anna V. Price

The following eight by-laws were adopted:

"We, the undersigned, do this day, November 5, 1902, agree to the following by-laws in covenant to united effort as a Ladies Aid Society of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church, Marlinton, W. Va., for the Lord's work in the congregation --

1. That we renew our consecration to the Lord and His service.

2. That we have a President, Secretary and Treasurer.

3. That we meet once a month.

4. That the meeting be opened with devotional exercises.

5. That we agree to pay not less than $.10 per month as regular dues to be used according to the will of the majority.

6. That we study the best method and means for the accomplishment of the Master's work.

7. That by diligent effort and reliance on Divine guidance, we will strive to aid the church in its temporal affairs and especially in its spiritual life.

8. That we elect officers every six months.

Signed,

Grace C. Price
Mrs. H. S. Rucker
Mary A. Nickell
Fanny Berry Bratton
Mary F. McNulty
Mrs. T. S. Patterson
Allie McClintic
Fannie McLaughlin
Anna V. Price

Thus began the first organized women's work of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church.

This organization was in existence until 1921 when the Auxiliary Circle plan was adopted.

Leaders who served the Ladies Aid Society as Presidents were: Mrs. Andrew Price, Mrs. T. S. Patterson, Mrs. H. A. Yeager, Mrs. T. S. McNeel, Mrs. W. A. Bratton, Mrs. Gierhardt, Mrs. H. C. Russell, Mrs. C. A. Howard, Mrs. A. P. Edgar, Mrs. G. W. Sharp, and Mrs. S. H. Sharp. Contributions were made for local expenses and for church

Respectfully,

benevolences. The money was raised in many ways; monthly offerings at meetings, suppers, bazaars, and sales of various kinds. The biggest financial undertaking was the compiling and printing of a cook book of tested recipes. The 500 copies of the first edition sold very quickly. The demand for the books being still great, the second 500 were printed and sold. Over $1000.00 was raised in this way.

Some of the ladies of the church, desiring to work more specifically and entirely for missions, organized the Women's Missionary Society in 1910. Its first president was Mrs. E. H. wade, and she served for several years. She was succeeded by Mrs. Z. S. Smith, Mrs. J. A. Wade, and Miss Virgie Sydenstricker. The latter served until 1921 and at that time she became president of the newly organized Women's Auxiliary. The first Vice president of the Missionary Society was Mrs. T. S. McNeel and the first Secretary and Treasurer, Mrs. J. A. Sydenstricker. The offerings were voluntary and were given to home and foreign missions. At each meeting devotional and informational programs in regard to missionary work were held. When possible, missionary speakers were secured. Among them were: Dr. Mary Fleming (Persia and later India) and Mrs. Carrie Sydenstricker (China).

Also in 1910, Mrs. A. S. Rachal, assisted by Mrs. Andrew Price, organized the Willing Workers, a society for younger girls from about the ages seven to fourteen. Among its first members were: Mary Frances and Guy Bratton, Agnes

and Margaret Price, Gladys and Marie Smith, Pearl Carter, Bell and Zoe Anderson, Opal McComb, and Rebecca Johnson. This organization contributed through its programs and activities to the spiritual growth of its members and their training for leadership.

Later, the Willing Workers continued their activities under the leadership of Mrs. John A. McLaughlin. Outstanding achievements of this period include : furnishing a room at Greenbrier College, buying an oil stove for the church kitchen, and assisting in other ways with local expenses, as well as liberal contributions to Kentucky mission work.

All of these organizations became members of the Missionary Union of Greenbrier Presbytery (now the Women's Auxiliary of Greenbrier Presbytery) and delegates were sent to its annual meetings.

In 1921 the Ladies Aid Society, the Women's Missionary Society and the Willing Workers were organized on the Auxiliary plan. Circle The following were the first officers:

President ----------Miss Virgie Sydenstricker

Vice President ------ Mrs. Andrew Price

Secretary ---------- Mrs. S. N. Hench

Treasurer --------- Mrs. Burton Wilson

Sec. of Foreign Missions -- Mrs. J. A. Wade

Sec. of Assembly's Home Missions - Mrs. J. A. Sydenstricker

Sec. Synodical Presbyterial & Congregational Home Missions- Mrs. Wise Herold

...proper respect b...

Sec of Sunday School & Young People's Work- Mrs. J. A. McLaughlin
Sec. Christian Education & Ministerial Relief - Mrs. Zane Moore
Sec. of Literature - Mrs. J. O. Smith
Pastor's Aid - Miss Mary McClintic
Social Secretary - Mrs. W. A. Bratton
Sec. of Prayer Band - Mrs. A. P. Edgar

There were in 1921 four circles with the following ladies as chairmen: Miss Susie Gay, Mrs. H. H. Orr, Mrs. E. G. Herold, and Mrs. R. B. Slaven. In 1930 there were nine circles and the circles include in their membership all the women of the church.

Presidents of the Auxiliary to the present time have been Miss Virgie Sydenstricker, Mrs. S. N. Hench, Mrs. Andrew Price, Mrs. L. S. Smith, Sr., Mrs A. P. Edgar, Mrs. J. W. Reynolds, Mrs. J. A. Sydenstricker, Mrs. G. D. Stemple and Mrs. Elliet Smith.

The programs in the year book are used at circle and auxiliary meetings. The birthday celebration is observed anually, at which time there is always a liberal offering. A flower committee sends flowers to the sick, and the circles in turn supply flowers for the pulpit. For many years it has been a custom of the Auxiliary to have a turkey dinner one day in the week before Thanksgiving. This not only substantially assists the treasury but serves the purpose of getting the church people together and contributes in this

- is shown proper respect by

way to the social life of the church. Boxes of canned goods are sent each year to the Davis School Home and School. Contributions to all the causes of the church are made, the most outstanding one being the self denial offering each year for foreign missions. I sometimes think that this special interest in foreign missions may be partly due to the example, influence and prayers of one of our earliest members, Mrs. M. A. McClintic. One of my earliest memories is seeing her drop a hundred dollar bill into the foreign mission collection in the days when a hundred dollar bill meant a great deal more money than it does today.

1938-1939

Auxiliary officers were as follows:

President, Mrs G. D. Stemple
Vice-President, Mrs. E. C. Smith
Secretary, Miss Angie Wade
Treasurer, Miss Alice Jackson
Historian, Mrs. Basil C. Sharp
In Charge of Music, Mrs. Z. S. Smith, Jr.

Pastor, The Rev. J. C. Wool

George W. Nickell, pastor of this church from 1900-1910, departed this life on March 17, 1939. His wife, Mrs. Mary Pollock Nickell, preceded him in death on September 6, 1938.

The church membership at the end of the year was 293.

Dr. Egbert G. Smith, Secretary of Foreign Missions, Emeritus, gave an interesting talk on Sept. 11, 1938. Another special speaker during the year was Robert E. Lob-

[illegible] is shown proper respect by being [illegible]

A series of special services were held in the church from Feb. 26, 1938, to March 5, 1838, conducted by the pastor. The Auxiliary held brief prayer meetings in the Ladies Parlor each night before the service.

In December Mrs. L. L. Cave, of Charlottesville, Virginia, a sister of Mrs. H. B. Morgan, deceased, for years a resident of Marlinton and who attended and contributed to this church though a member of another denomination, donated the sum of Seven Hundred Dollars in cash to be applied to the Manse debt. The manse debt has now been completely paid off and the church is completely out of debt.

The Sunday School has an enrollment of 240, with 19 teachers. There are seven departments fully organized, with a home department and a cradle roll. Monthly workers conferences are regularly held and well attended. A teachers' training class was held in the summer.

Presbyterian Youth, the young people's organization in our church, has carried on its full program of work throughout the year. Inez Moore, Eugene Smith, and John Miner attended the Young People's Conference at Lewisburg. The Auxiliary helped with the expenses of sending these young people to Conference.

The Young People's Choir, organized in the latter part of 1937, has steadily increased in number, and vestments were secured for the choir in the early part of the year.

The Auxiliary meets each fourth Thursday at the Church,

using for its programs the material supplied by the Program Committee.

The Circles meet in the home of some member sometime during the second week of each month.

An Easter Bazaar was held on April 16, and the annual Turkey Supper was held Nov. 18.

A study of Philippians was led by Mr. Wool during September and October for four consecutive Wednesday evenings, with an average attendance at each meeting of 26 women and 8 men.

1939-1940

Auxiliary officers:

President, Mrs. G. D. Stemple

Vice-President, Mrs. June McElwee

Secretary, Mrs. Mack Brooks

Treasurer, Mrs. Alice K. Jackson

Historian, Mrs. Basil C. Sharp

In Charge of Music, Mrs. Z. S. Smith, Jr.

Pastor, Rev. James C. Wool.

The membership of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church is now 300. During the year eleven members have been added by profession of faith, nine by letter, and we have lost five members by death and five members by letters of dismission to other churches.

A series of special evangeliatic services were conducted in the church January 24 to February 2, 1940, by the Rev.

W. E. Hill, of Hopewell, Virginia. Cottage prayer meetings were held preceding the evangelistic meeting.

The Sunday School now has an enrollment of 249, with 17 teachers and eight officers. There are seven departments fully organized with a home department and a cradle roll. A teachers' training school was conducted in May, 1939, by Dr. Carmichael and Miss Alta Bowman. All of the Presbyterian Churches in the county participated in this training school.

Eugene Smith, President, Charles Edward McElwee, Vice-President, and Billy Moore, Secretary and Treasurer, were the officers of Presbyterian Youth. Patty Stemple, Alice Fortune, Ruth Withers, Charles E. McElwee and Eugene Smith attended the Young Peoples' Conference at Lewisburg, and Stanley Moore, Billy Moore, Dotty Lou McLaughlin and George Vaughan attended Intermediate Camp at Hinton.

Presbyterian Youth was host to the young people of this Presbytery at their Spring Rally on April 7th and 8th, 1939. The Auxiliary served 110 young people attending this Rally at a banquet and two lunches.

In September a party was given for the students going away to school..

An Organ Fund of $200.00 was established by the Auxiliary in March. Contributions were made to the Davis-Stuart School, Davis and Elkins College, White Cross Work, and for the support of a Japanese girl in the Assembly's Training School.

For the year of 1940-1941, Mrs. [illegible] Hogsett [illegible]

President. The work of the Auxiliary is progressing along the same line of work as last year.

Information: History of Church Societies of the Marlinton Presbyterian Church - by Mrs. Andrew Price
Miss Susie Gay
Mrs. Basil C. Sharp